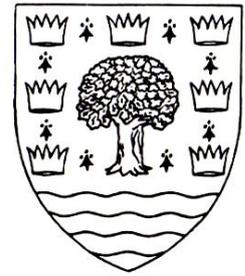


Ilford Historical Society

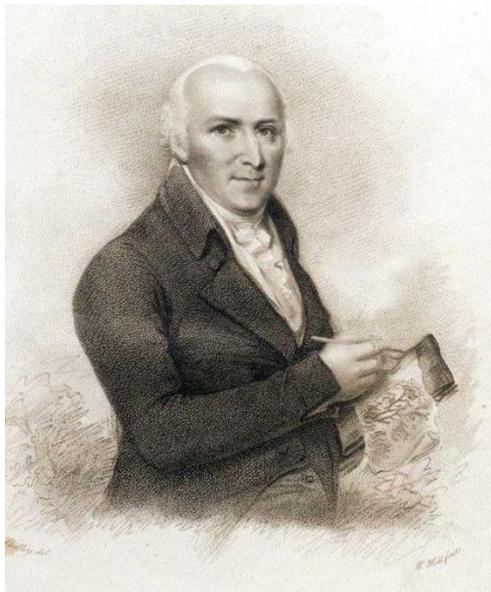
Newsletter No.125 December 2017



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Our website can be found at: <http://ilfordhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/>

Humphry Repton (1752 – 1818) Landscape Gardener



Humphry Repton spent his childhood and early married life in Suffolk and Norfolk but in 1783 he moved with his family to a cottage at Hare Street, Gidea Park. The site is now Lloyds Bank on the corner of Balgores Lane and Main Road, between Romford and Gallows Corner.

In 1788, aged 36, he realised that nobody had stepped in to replace Capability Brown (who had died five years earlier) and so he decided to set up in business as a landscape gardener. His previous experiences had given him a good background for this work and he quickly became established working for all sorts of people from the nouveaux riches to the aristocracy. Repton claimed that by the end of his career he had written more than 400 reports although only 339 sites

are known today. Many of his clients were given a 'Red Book' containing a text with his ideas illustrated with delicate watercolours with an overlay to show his transformations.

110 'Red Books' have survived and it is not surprising that several of them are for places fairly close to his home. They include Higham Hill (now Woodford County High School) for John Harman (1793/4) and Woodford Hall for John Maitland (1801). His bound work on Wanstead for William Long Wellesley in 1813 was discovered in 2002 and adds to our knowledge of his work locally. Claybury Hall for James Hatch (1791) was his only commission in Ilford and I hope to write about Claybury in a future newsletter.

Humphry Repton died 200 years ago, on 24th March 1818, aged 65, and was buried in the village of Aylsham, Norfolk, where his grave is marked by a stone inscribed with the epitaph he had written for himself, and by a bed of roses.

Georgina Green, 27th November 2017

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Mary Godwin, née Wollstonecraft (1759-97)

Mary was the eldest daughter and second child of Edward Wollstencraft and she was born on 27th April 1759 at Spitalfields. At that time the family were comfortably off with both Mary's grandfathers running successful businesses. Unfortunately, her father turned away from commerce hoping to become a gentleman farmer, so early in the 1760s he took his growing family to live on a farm at Epping. He had no agricultural talent and when Mary was five years old the family moved again, to a farm near the Whalebone at Chadwell Heath. The following year, autumn 1765, the family moved again to 'a convenient house behind the town of Barking' having benefitted from a considerable inheritance.

Edward Wollstencraft is recorded as Overseer of the Poor for Ripple Ward in 1767-8. This was a parish office, held by a respected citizen who was expected to serve for a year. Mary's father may have seemed like a pillar of society but Edward was a bully who abused his wife, Elizabeth, and their children after heavy drinking sessions. Elizabeth bore him four boys and three girls, but only his first born (Ned) was given any real education. Mary and her other siblings snatched what lessons they could and learned to read and write while the family were uprooted and moved around the country as their father's fortunes declined. In 1768 the family moved to Beverley in Yorkshire, later back to London, then to Wales, finally returning to London again.

Mary was an intelligent woman who, without help, acquired several languages and became an author and advocate of women's rights, no doubt heavily influenced by her childhood experiences. When she met radical publisher Joseph Johnson, Mary found a mentor. She gave up her teaching post and was encouraged to write, publishing several books to the financial benefit of them both. The first *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* was published in 1787. Mary met other radicals like Thomas Paine and William Blake, and her treatise on *A Vindication of The Rights of Women* was published in 1792. It was an immediate success and has repercussions up until today.

In 1788 Mary met Henry Fuseli, a well-known painter and literary figure, and fell in love with him. She was aged 29 but he was 47 and married and there is little evidence to suggest he returned her affection. Mary lived in a Bohemian manner and while in Paris in 1793 she met and fell in love with Captain Gilbert Imlay, an American revolutionary, and bore him a child. Society assumed they were married but this was not the case and when Mary discovered Imlay had a new mistress she attempted suicide.

Mary first met William Godwin, the foremost radical philosopher of his day, at a party in November 1791. After her split from Imlay their acquaintance developed and they became lovers. In September 1796 Mary, aged 36, took William to Barking where she found her old house uninhabited and the garden in a wild and ruinous state.

Mary and William married in March 1797. They had both been against the idea of marriage but felt this was right when Mary realised she was pregnant again. Those few months were a happy time for Mary but she died after giving birth to her daughter, Mary, on 30th August. (In 1816 Mary married the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and became famous in her own right as the creator of *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* published on 1st January 1818.)

Mary did not live many years in Barking but the Godwin name is commemorated by a primary school in Dagenham. Having worked for the LB of Barking & Dagenham education department for twenty years I am well aware of the Wollstonecraft / Godwin / Shelley

connection and I look forward to the talk by Janet Seward ‘My Hideous Progeny’: Mary Shelley and Frankenstein 1818-2018’ on 12th March 2018.

© *Georgina Green, 30th October 2017*

Sources: *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* which contains a long and detailed account of her most interesting life – this article is just a taster!

Residents and Visitors, published by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (1996) p.8

Building Ilford : Ilford Super Cinema and Woodlands Primary School

Further to the article ‘Meet the Historian’ on page 2 of our August issue, it was exciting to see the model of the Ilford Super Cinema made by pupils in Year 6 at Woodlands Primary School included in the new exhibition at Redbridge Museum. The Museum had commissioned the pupils to research, design and construct an accurate architectural scale model of a building which no longer exists in Ilford town centre and, after studying building plans in the Redbridge Heritage Centre, they chose the cinema.



Pupils from Woodlands Primary School with their model at the opening of the exhibition on 1st November.

See details of the exhibition on the back page.

The Super Cinema opened in 1922 on the corner of Ley Street and Balfour Road, just at the top of Cranbrook Road. The exhibition includes recollections of visiting the cinema as told to the children by our member John Barfoot. It was badly damaged by a V2 rocket on 8th February 1945. The building was finally demolished in 1959 and a new C & A store opened on the site in March 1960. Today this is occupied by Wilko at the entrance to the Exchange.

Museum Officer Gerard Greene, comments:

“We really enjoyed working in partnership with Woodlands Primary School, first to secure a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the exhibition project and then to support them in undertaking research into the history of the town centre and in particular the Ilford Super Cinema. It was great to be able to share the original cinema building plans from our collections and to put them to such good use. It shows what a valuable resource Heritage Centre’s archives are, both for learning about the past but also as a source of inspiration for creative work today.

We were also pleased that IHS members answered our call to be interviewed by the pupils about their memories of Ilford. This sort of intergenerational work is invaluable in not only helping young people to learn from long-term residents and learn new skills but hopefully was fun and enjoyable for everyone who took part. I’m sure visitors to the exhibition will appreciate the hard work from all concerned.”

The Embassy Cinema, Chadwell Heath, RM6 4BD

The Embassy Cinema, of Chadwell Heath, was opened on the 17th May 1934 by the Mayor of Ilford, Alderman B.S.J Pitt. It was known as a ‘Super Cinema’ as it also incorporated theatre, staging live variety shows and organ performances. It featured a tea-lounge and an artistic café, as well as a ballroom for dancing to the sound of a live orchestra; this brought much style and elegance to the residents of Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Havering. The cinema offered 1,812 seats to the public: 1,232 in the stalls and 580 in the circle. A number of local newspapers, at the time, cited it as “*the last word in splendour and comfort*”.

It was designed and part-owned by the architect Harry Weston, and was the second of eight cinemas that he is known to have designed. He had previously designed the *Plaza Cinema* in Worthing (1933) and went on to design another six cinemas during the 1930s, mostly for the *Gaumont British Picture Corporation*. The Managing Directors, Charles A. Sinden and Mr P. Lyons, as well as the Secretary of ‘Embassy (Chadwell Heath) Ltd.’, Mr R. Teppett, played instrumental roles in the creation of the cinema. The construction of the building began in mid-December 1933, with the majority of it being completed within only twenty-two weeks.



Facade at night, 1934: RIBA Collections

Harry Weston designed *The Embassy Cinema* in a more lavish style than would have been usual for a ‘*Gaumont Cinema*’. Its façade had quite a Modernist horizontal emphasis, faced in cream/‘biscuit’ coloured faience tiling above and black faience tiles below¹, with chromium

¹ Faience tiles are a type of ceramic tile. They originally overtook terracotta in popularity due to their resistance to pollution, their general versatility and the ease with which they can be cleaned. Many London Underground

plated fittings, enhanced by neon strip lighting and illuminated signs at night. There is a large window over the entrance which allows light into the ballroom. The lavish double-height entrance foyer featured wonderful Art Deco metalwork and a floodlit glass column of crystalline rods. The auditorium originally had a ‘saucered’ floor to improve sight-lines from the seats. The splay walls featured Streamline Moderne, horizontal fins which extended across



Auditorium, 1934: RIBA Collections

decorative panels and grillwork, leading towards the proscenium arch which was backlit from the rim.

Upon declaring the cinema to be open, Alderman Pitt professed to the public that he considered the building to be a “*wonderful contribution to the corporate life of the Borough. One could see films depicting re-happenings of today which in the ordinary way one could only read about, could be shown the humorous side of life or something historical, or, on the other hand, stories depicting pathos and tragedy.*”

The Mayor then jovially remarked,

“The cinema of today is part of the life of the people, a place where they receive pleasure, instruction and education, and in this case they will receive it in ideal conditions. In my humble opinion, in spite of all the criticism which one hears, the cinema is undoubtedly assisting in the uplifting of the masses. Another important factor was the growth of the British film industry which, by its success, had given employment to hundreds of British subjects, as well as increasing the spending capacity of the nation. I hope and trust that British films will continue to flourish, and with success, such improvements will be made that they may command the British market, in order that we may get rid of those films which give you American slang!”

‘*A Short Story about The Embassy*’, a history of the cinema produced by Lyons, was one of the first films to be shown on the opening night. It was an amusing feature showing the construction of the building sped-up, and was enthusiastically received. The programme was continued with a *Mickey Mouse Disney* cartoon, ‘*Fury of the Jungle*’ and ‘*Broadway Through a Keyhole*’. A short recital was then given by Terence Dene, the resident organist, with a demonstration, given by Lyons, of the lighting effects of the organ’s console and fan attachment in the auditorium. Variety performances were interspersed throughout the night.

Alderman Pitt congratulated Weston, very sincerely, for designing the building, the contractors, *Dorman, Long & Co. Limited* and *Andrews Gibbs Builders Ltd.*, for the

stations are characterised by their oxblood red, faience tiled facades, such as Chalk Farm, Russell Square and Oxford Circus. Faience remained popular until the 1940s, and was a favourite with architects of the Art Deco period. Although, following the Second World War, their popularity declined – until the 21st century.

excellence of their work, and the owners, Sinden and Lyons, for their business foresight and enterprise. He then thanked them, on behalf of the public living in the area, for the outstanding provision that they had made. Cheques worth thirty guineas and ten guineas were handed to the Mayor, for the *King George Hospital* and the *Ilford Tuberculosis Care Association* respectively, by the proprietors of *The Embassy*. The Mayor stated that this generous act demonstrated that Sinden and Lyons were prepared to accept their share of the responsibilities which faced the burgesses, and trusted that their venture would realise all of their expectations.

Lyons believed that the cinema would meet the needs of a very rapidly growing locality. He stated to local reporters, in an interview with *The Dagenham Post*, that “in his opinion, British films, of which he had booked many, would become as important an industry as they were in the United States”.

The Embassy Cinema encompassed a number of features and innovative ideas, some of which were unknown in the cinema world at the time:

- A 24-foot deep stage and orchestra pit, in the auditorium, could accommodate live performances as there were also four adjacent dressing rooms. The large screen was controlled by a mechanism, that could make it move backwards and forwards; when a picture was showing it was lowered towards the audience, thereby minimising eye-strain.
- The latest system of *Western Electric* wide-range apparatus provided rich sound quality and substantially high production value; Sinden and Lyons wanted to ensure that hearing would be perfect from every seat in the house.
- Concealed lighting was fitted throughout the building, and controlled from the roof, to achieve special, flat skylight effects.
- To lower the levels of humidity, the air, to the amount of two million cubic feet per hour, was drawn into a purifying chamber by huge, electric fans. It was then filtered, washed, heated and cooled by means of this inventive ventilation system; thus, ensuring equable temperature in all seasons.
- An undercover exit to the spacious rear car park, from the ballroom via an iron staircase, proved a real boon in wet weather.
- The projector room was large enough to contain three to five projectors, and lighting control boxes for the stage, balcony and auditorium (manufactured by '*Major Equipment Co. Ltd*' of Westminster).
- The auditorium housed a fine *Compton 3-manual/8-rank* organ with a spectacular illuminated 'fan' which opened to great effect like peacock feathers. The glass console of the organ had a unique green colour scheme, and the special illumination was an idea introduced by Lyons; an innovation that he perfected years earlier, and one of the first of its kind in Britain.
- The decoration scheme followed lines of effective simplicity, with the dominating colour of the wall being old gold. The seats were of the tip-up variety, lavishly upholstered in green velvet. The luxurious carpets were green and beige, whilst the curtains, hangings (and even the uniforms of the ushers and attendants) also embodied the same colour scheme.

The vast auditorium granted a sense of spaciousness and airiness, whilst the decorative effects, and sumptuous furnishings, delighted audiences. Many of these features have survived, and show how Weston carried his Art Deco/Streamline Moderne style throughout all of his cinema's spaces and details. Overall, it was a significant and sophisticated addition to the town of Chadwell Heath.



Foyer, 1934: RIBA Collections

The Cinema ran throughout the Second World War and was never sub-divided. However, after various changes in ownership, including the *Gaumont* chain (*Provincial Cinematograph Theatres*), it ultimately closed as a cinema on 28th July 1966.

On 8th August 2017, the *Chadwell Heath South Residents' Association* successfully listed *The Embassy Cinema* as an *Asset of Community Value*. The local community group then proceeded to launch '*The Embassy Cinema Restoration Project*', with the aim of acquiring the building and restoring it back into a repertory cinema, that can incorporate film, theatre, live music and dance; by virtue of its existing stage, orchestra pit, projector room, dressing room and ballroom. A single-screen experience for old classic movies, cult films and arthouse productions, all in a variety of film formats (from 16mm, 35mm and 70mm, to Super 8 and 4K) and housed in a vintage Art Deco/Streamline Moderne setting.

The *Chadwell Heath South Residents' Association* have ambitious plans to make *The Embassy Cinema* one of London's finest Art Deco experiences; the catalyst which results in a rejuvenation of the surrounding area, that can have a lasting impact for generations.

© *Ramanan Muraleetharan, 14th November 2017*

Chairman of '*Chadwell Heath South Residents' Association*'

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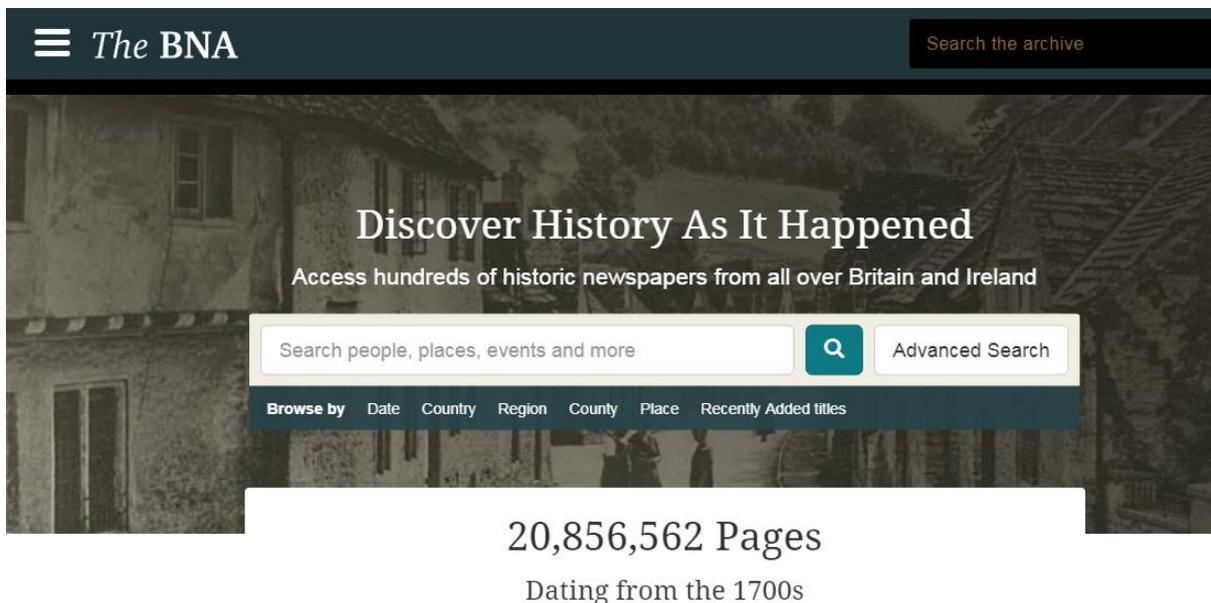
Redbridge Libraries Online resources for Historians

Redbridge Libraries have a great selection of online resources for historians available for you to use both at home and in libraries. You will need a library membership to access them.

Other online resources include *The Dictionary of National Biography*, *Grove Art and Music*, *Oxford Reference*, *Credo Reference* and *Britannica*. These can all be used at home and accessed from <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/libraries/reference-and-online-resources>

If you are interested in family history, the library subscribes to both **Ancestry** (the library edition) and **FindMypast**. Both websites allow you to trace where your ancestors were staying on the night of the census from 1851 to 1911. You can also look at birth, marriage and death registrations, parish records, travel and migration records and military records. Each website also has some records unique to the site such as school records, electoral registers, institutional records and directories. Both of these websites can be consulted at the library. If you would like some help to use these sites, you can book a free session by contacting the Heritage Centre.

The British Newspaper Archive is another useful resource which can be consulted at the library. The Archive contains digital copies of newspapers from the British Library's collection. The *Iford Recorder* from 1902 to 1905 has recently been digitized and can be searched by keyword making it an excellent resource for local historians. Other newspapers which have local stories for Redbridge are *The Essex Herald* (1828-1899), *The Essex Newsman* (1870-1950) and *The Essex Standard* (1831-1900).



The BNA Search the archive

Discover History As It Happened

Access hundreds of historic newspapers from all over Britain and Ireland

Search people, places, events and more Advanced Search

Browse by Date Country Region County Place Recently Added titles

20,856,562 Pages

Dating from the 1700s

The Times Digital Archive can be searched online at Redbridge Heritage Centre. It details every complete page of every issue of *The Times* newspaper from 1785 through to 2010 and is good for researching both national and local history. It is surprising how many local stories have appeared in *The Times*. If you would like to find out more about this archive, there is a training session on Wednesday 7th February at 2pm at the Heritage Centre run by Carolyn Beckford. Phone Redbridge Heritage Centre to book your place.

Free magazines to download

If you have a pc, laptop or tablet, you can download popular magazines free of charge. There are over 300 magazines to choose from including history titles such as the *BBC History Magazine*, *Who Do You Think You Are* and *Your Family History*. Just visit <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/libraries/reference-and-online-resources> and choose *eMagazines (RB Digital)* to gain access. The magazines can be kept on your device until you decide to delete them.

If you would like to know more about any of these resources, please contact the Redbridge Heritage Centre on 0208 708 2422 or email info.heritage@visionrcl.org.uk. The Heritage Centre is on the 2nd floor of Redbridge Central Library, Clements Road, IG1 1EA. Redbridge Libraries and Redbridge Heritage Centre are managed by Vision RCL on behalf of Redbridge Council.

© *Sue Page, Development Librarian at the Heritage Centre*

Of course, the Heritage Centre still houses the old-fashioned books and maps which are so useful to the likes of me! Most of them are now in locked cases but do ask the staff for anything you'd like to see from the Local Collection or if you need help in finding something.

Georgina Green, Editor

Bernard George (1923-2017)



Bernard George was a founder member of Ilford Historical Society who sadly passed away on 4th August and I attended the funeral at the Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception in Epping. The funeral was well attended by his family and friends. He was a very quiet and unassuming man who was an excellent local historian and photographer of local houses and buildings, many of which have since been demolished and cleared. Often those photos are the only record that the building existed and I have used them in my talks. Many of his photos were deposited with the Local Studies Library in Ilford.

Bernard often attended meetings with his wife Margaret and he was devastated when she died in 2008.

I always enjoyed meeting and speaking to him at our meetings and he was always concerned about our Society. Tall, distinguished looking and well dressed, he always stayed quietly in the background when his friend Ron Antoniou brought him to our meetings. A sad loss to his family to whom we sent our condolences.

Dorothy Lockwood wrote to say that she and Bert knew Bernard and Margaret over many years and were so pleased when they married. Ilford Historical Society meant a great deal to Bernard and he was pleased to serve on the committee but was very self-effacing.

Jef Page, President, October 2017

Sources for local history : Building Plans

It may not be widely known that the Museum and Heritage section of Redbridge Central Library holds – literally – thousands of plans of buildings relating to Redbridge. These range from entire area, drainage, and street plans; churches and cinemas; stables and garages; down to alterations to houses including installing WCs and additional bedrooms. The majority of the plans are folded and stored in individual envelopes, and numbered for identification purposes.

However, it should be noted that not all plans are available – sometimes the original list records that the plan is missing and what has been left may be a document relating to the building. Where the original list records the exact location of the building, this still has some use to researchers but where we are left with simply “one house” in a particular street, the value of the record diminishes greatly.

Not all plans were approved and it is fascinating to see the types of schemes that were put forward only to see them being rejected or where proposed road names were altered. For example, in 1900, a Mr T.K. Mackenzie submitted a plan to build 153 homes in several streets but all with the name of Mackenzie Avenue. His plan was obviously rejected since some of the houses (in the area to the west of Bengal Road) weren't built until the late 1920s and the southern part of his plan was laid out as a recreation ground.

In another plan from 1903, 16 houses were proposed as numbers 43-73 Waverley Road. Since no such road exists, the plan was brought from the archive and found to relate to the extension of Natal Road to the west. It has yet to be established whether Waverley Road ever existed but certainly by 1909 the houses were listed in the Kelly's Directory under Natal Road.

IHS member and former membership secretary Carol Franklin has taken on the task of computerizing the details of every Ilford plan onto Excel spreadsheets. Carol began by transferring the paper lists that had been drawn up many years ago, and is now transferring information from the plans themselves for the periods not covered by the original lists. The details include the following: Plan number, Month and Year, Building Type, House numbers, Company, Street name, Area of Ilford, Number of houses, Proposer, Builder, Architect etc. So, for example, if you wanted to look at every plan held by a particular builder – Cameron Corbett for instance – this can be done very quickly by filtering the information held on the spreadsheet.

The Heritage section hold plans up to 1965 and, so far, Carol has documented plans up to 1947 and has reached the point where houses were starting to be rebuilt following bomb damage during WW2.

As a researcher into the streets and houses of Ilford, the original plans and the lists are invaluable for my work into the growth of the area. This is especially true for the years before the earliest Kelly's Directory of 1899-1900, where details of when roads were laid out or the first houses built can be sketchy to say the least.

Enquiries on what the Heritage section holds on particular streets or buildings can be made to info.heritage@visionrcl.org.uk. The earliest plans for Ilford that are held are for 1885, Wanstead 1858, and Woodford 1879.

© *Colin Runeckles, 23rd August 2017*



Colin will be our speaker on 14th May 2018 about 'On the Street Where You Live'. As he says "Walking down Ilford's streets can tell us a lot about its development and houses." To illustrate our programme leaflet I included my own photograph (taken in June 2010) of nos.12,10, 8 and 6 Wycombe Road. These cottages were probably built in the 1880s for workers on the Valentines estate and were originally fairly simple buildings which have been embellished in recent years.

Georgina Green, October 2017

A Virtual Ramble back in time: In search of Hatton Corner

A ramble around the farms and fields of Beehive, Cranbrook, Highlands, St Swithins, Shackmans and Clayhall in glorious summer sun sounds great. Meadows full of golden stooks of corn, sheaves set upright after the harvest, the smell of new mown grass. Blue tits, goldfinches and sparrows fighting for corn seeds, a perfect day for a Sunday stroll along field paths. Away from the weekly rush, relaxation for all the family, simple free pleasures, walking beside the sparkling Roding, a picnic amongst wild garlic, oak and elm trees. Idyllic, almost dreamlike, a memory.

Sir Christopher Hatton (1540-91) was one of Queen Elizabeth I's most famous ministers. He came to her notice because of his dancing skills (she loved the galliard and lavolta). But once she took him into her service he proved to be one of the most loyal, able and trusted men in her close inner circle of courtiers and was given the posts of Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard 1572, Vice Chamberlain of the Royal Household 1577 and in 1587 Lord Chancellor.

I have a copy of *Country Rambles around Ilford* written by George Tasker c.1910, price 6d. He and his family lived in Mayfair Avenue, off The Drive, near Cranbrook Road, Ilford. The second ramble starts along The Drive when he walked past the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel - first erected in 1902 on the corner of Clarendon Road, and Cranbrook Castle "a strange edifice, a landmark for miles around ... the turrets are as high above sea-level as the Cross of St Paul's Cathedral". He then proceeded via a large field towards Hatton Corner, Clayhall farm - formerly Clayhall mansion, Mossford Green, and back home down Cranbrook Road via Horseshoes - but it was Hatton Corner which caught my eye. Sir Christopher Hatton living in Ilford or owning property here? But as far as I know, he was a Northamptonshire man and pinning down an illustration of the little known, Hatton Corner proved very elusive.

Cranbrook Castle was on the site of the PLA sports ground ², now Cranbrook Primary School along the Drive. "Hatton Corner is one of the seven hamlets which make up Barkingside.. probably deriving its name from Sir Christopher Hatton who lived here many years ago" (Tasker). Gants Hill as a place didn't exist in 1910 so Barkingside covered a much wider area.

Two photos in Tasker (pp 12 & 13) accompany the ramble mentioning Hatton Corner and that on page 12 was reprinted in *Ilford A Second Selection* (see opposite). This shows fields that have been recently harvested with stooks set up and drying so presumably it is August or September, and there are trees alongside the field path. Beside the stile in the foreground are a little girl and a woman, possibly her mother, to show scale and human interest. Not a house is in sight. Tasker's caption states: "A Charming Prospect - Commencement of the field path to Hatton Corner. View from Wanstead Lane by the Castle Path (The Drive)".



This is thought to show The Drive looking north from near Beehive Lane c.1900. Picture and caption from Ian Dowling & Nick Harris: "*Ilford A Second Selection*" of photographs, p.35

² Cranbrook Castle built c.1756 by Sir Charles Raymond as a family mausoleum but never used as such. Bought and demolished c.1922 by the Port of London Authority.

Tasker's view on p.13 is presumably further along i.e. nearer or along Woodford Bridge Road, and now the caption states: "The Descent to Hatton Corner. Affording views to Woodford and Buckhurst Hill". Again, there isn't a house in sight, very few families lived in this area of farmland though Tasker did note the "cottages at the bottom of the hill" (Woodford Bridge Road) and only trees can be seen on the distant skyline. Being able to see Buckhurst Hill maybe a bit fanciful but the direction northwards is fine.

Hatton Corner is on the corner of Woodford Bridge Road (WBR), now at the junction with Woodford Avenue where Beal School is. And it's not 'the' Sir Christopher Hatton that the name celebrates, but a little known cousin, also Sir Christopher Hatton, (1581-1619). He succeeded to the Clayhall estate in 1597, was joint Steward of Barking manor, married Alice Fanshawe of Barking 1602 (the previous tenants had been the Fanshawe family) and lived at Clayhall c.1608-19 which he leased. It must have been a grand manor house on high ground and he built a private chapel consecrated by the Bishop of Chester 1616³ (later used as a barn, very demeaning). Copies of two letters in Dorothy Hobbs' archive⁴ have just been found, one written by Lady Fanshawe and she refers to the mansion as being 'unwholesome'. I think Tasker mistakenly presumed that it was 'the' Sir Christopher who had lived in the mansion.

Trying to follow the route of the ramble in your mind isn't easy because both the Eastern and Woodford Avenues and other roads cut across the route, and worse, there are no maps of the rambles in the book to follow. Looking at old maps of fields without the landmarks of our roads today it's difficult to work out what Tasker means, where you are and where you are headed. By 1900 Sir Christopher Hatton's home was the site of Clayhall Farm. When the area was photographed by Dorothy Hobbs in 1935 the farmhouse and chapel had long gone but some of the old garden walls still existed and were where Clayhall Park railings ran along Herent Drive. Her many scrapbooks of memorabilia, press cuttings and photos are brilliant.

As you walk down WBR the small, isolated, terrace of eight Hatton Cottages stood on the left on the corner now of Woodford Avenue and in 1891 they were listed as 'The Eight Cottages' in Beehive Lane and a well is noted as being there for the families use. Today, Beehive Lane runs from Cranbrook Road across the Eastern Avenue only as far as the roundabout at the Woodford Avenue. Originally it ran on all the way on to Woodford Bridge Road, virtually following the line of Woodford Avenue, named New Road on the 1896 map. Possibly Tasker kept to the field path beside Shackmans Farm (misspelt Strackmans on earlier maps?), up to the brickfields at St Swithins⁵ on WBR which he mentions in his book. Annoyingly Tasker photographed very few buildings on his rambles.

Trying to track Hatton Row and Hatton Corner proved difficult as its name varies but it was clearly part of the Census enumerators route along Beehive Lane. The cottages and who lived in them, and when, has proved elusive. One cottage or more is shown on the 1896 map and we

³ Peter Foley: "*Ilford's Countryside*": farms and country estates of old Ilford, superimposed on modern street maps"- *Lands of the De la Claies*. History of the manor of Clayhall is in the "*Barking and Ilford extract*" Vol 5 pp.195-196, "*Victoria County History*", published by Redbridge Libraries 1987. A photo of the later Clayhall farmhouse built by Peter Easton in 1763 is in "*Ilford A Second Selection*" p.72. I have unable to locate an illustration of Clayhall mansion.

⁴ Dorothy Mary Hobbs (1890-1974) was a local teacher and excellent local history enthusiast and photographer. Her scrapbooks, an untapped, detailed archive resource, are held by Redbridge Heritage Services.

⁵ The PDSA- Peoples Dispensary for Sick Animals- is on the site of St Swithin's farm.

know that at least five families lived in them in 1841 (Census information), part of Barking parish. A separate Barkingside parish was created in 1841. In the 1841 Census named are: at Fern Hall (Red Bridge) lived the Rumsey family, a separate Hattons Row of six families at White Hall (Mary and Sarah Hatton), and at Hattons Corner at least five more families and various lodgers. Listed at Hattons Row were: the Dockrill family, Ann Hammond and her three daughters, William Chapman's family, George Saggars and family, Mary Adams family, and Elizabeth and Samuel Wainwright and his five children. Agricultural labourer was the main job for the men. William Ingram lived at Clay Hall, (the Hatton family lived at Clayberry Hall) and two other Wainwrights are listed at "Clay Hall Farm Yard". Branches of the Ingram family lived at Barkingside and ran the post office there.

So by the 1890s Hattons Cottages had been there a long time and expanded from 1, up to 8. A photo found recently by Redbridge Heritage Services c.1925 (opposite) shows the cottages on the corner, higher ground of WBR, beside the newly built and opened Woodford Avenue still only one roadway- not yet a dual carriageway. It looks rather bleak. A

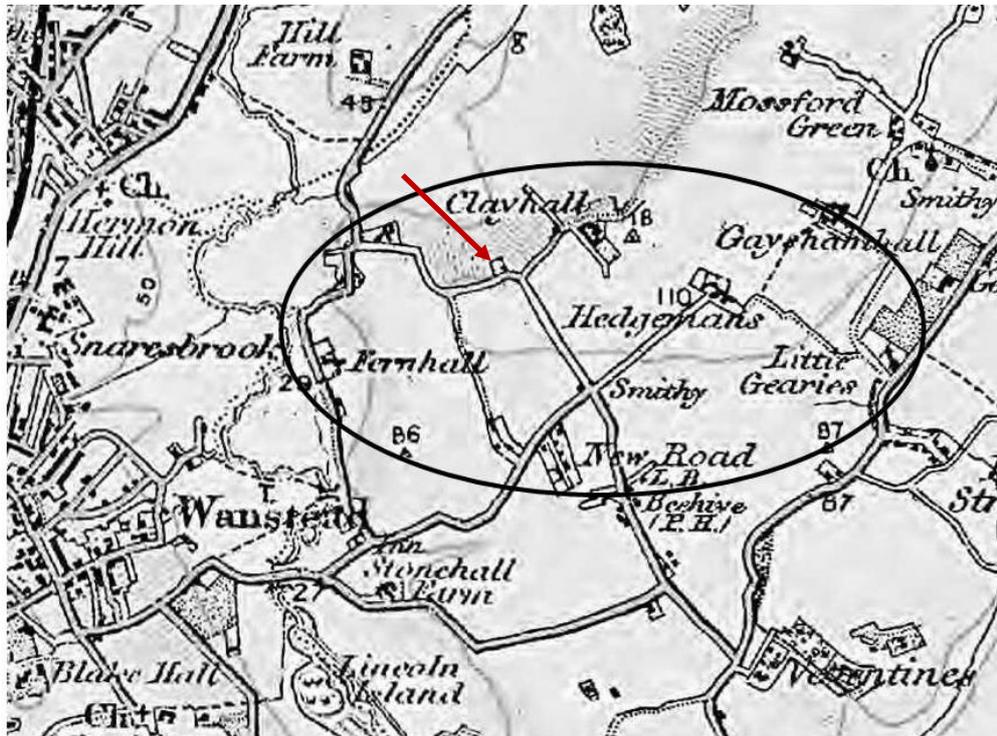


telegraph pole is up though who there had a phone at that time is unknown. The lone terrace looks in good order, rebuilt and enlarged since 1896, but I have not been able to find out when it was built. Neither the cottages nor WBR are listed in Kellys Directory till 1929.

But we do know the surnames of the eight families who lived in the cottages in 1939 as their names were listed in the Register when World War II broke out: Bridge, Arthur and Susan Budge, Downs, Hewson, Hewson, Myers, Rawlings, and Speller. Whether the occupants had been evacuated or bombed-out earlier we don't know but the Budge family clearly lost their home during World War II and they moved to Babbacombe Gardens and lived opposite the home of Daphne Rumsey (thanks very much for her memories and help) who knew them. During the war the cottages suffered a direct hit from a V1 on 7th July 1944 but none of the families are listed amongst Ilford's war dead. We don't know if any of the families were in the forces, at work, home or wounded. In fact the area was unlucky as the week before at the end of June, a V1 had hit Herent Drive and Lord Avenue causing deaths and heavy damage with several houses there totally destroyed, and damage to the cottages across the Woodford Avenue to WBR. As far as I can tell, there were no fatalities initially at Hatton Corner which seems amazingly lucky though we know that at the end of June, a first aid post in Babbacombe Gardens received casualties: six injured, five treated (seems very small numbers) and some were taken to hospital ⁶. What happened to the people we don't know yet.

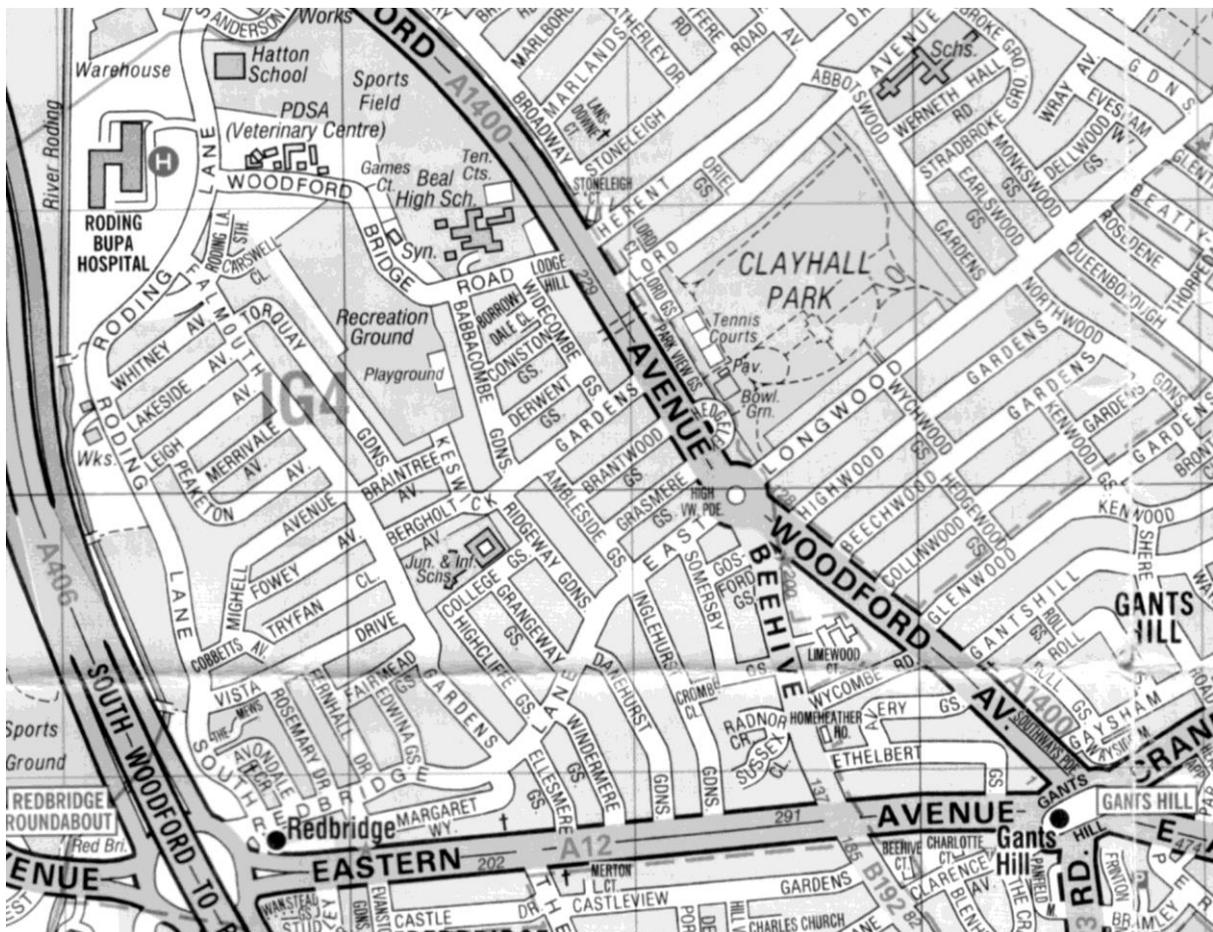
Taking a direct hit in July, Hatton Cottages clearly suffered severe damage, if not being completely blown to bits, and when the war ended the terrace wasn't repaired or replaced but completely cleared. On the site huts were erected to house, probably temporarily, Italian prisoners of war. Now part of Beal School fields which opened on that site in 1957, The Row, Cottages, Corner, surrounding fields and farms faded into history, a name in an old book or on a map that took some finding, just a memory, all gone now.

⁶ *Blitz Then and Now*, p.403, Jack Dyer's memories 1989.



Left
 Ordnance Survey,
 1 inch, New Series
 (Revised) (Hills)
 Surveyed 1862-73,
 Revised 1893,
 Published 1896

Below
 The modern Street
 Map



With great thanks and acknowledgements to: Sue Page, Daphne Rumsey, Paula Wade, Redbridge Information & Heritage staff, Colin Runeckles, Georgina Green, & Madeleine Janes.

© Jef Page, President, 24th November 2017

Building Ilford : 150 years of building the town centre

This is the title of the new exhibition which opened at Redbridge Museum on 1st November. As readers of our newsletter will know, the early road layout in Ilford can be traced back several centuries but the community really started to expand with the opening of the railway in 1839, with the major increase in house building gathering momentum from around the 1890s. As new plans are discussed about the future development of the town centre it is a timely reminder of the earlier changes. From Edwardian expansion to post-war rebuilding, from Ilford Palais to Pioneer Point, including the grand schemes that were never built, the exhibition explores the building challenges and opportunities that continue up to the present day. The exhibition is in the museum's exhibition area on the first floor of Redbridge Central Library and is open Tuesday – Friday 10am – 5pm and Saturday 10am – 4pm, until 9th June 2018. Admission is free.

For more details see www.redbridge.gov.uk/museum, and our article on page 3.

Museum Manager Gerard Greene will be talking about the exhibition at our December meeting, as well as being a guest for our 'Meet the Historian' panel.

Humphry Repton Bi-Centenary - Georgina Green will be giving a talk for Vision at Redbridge Central Library Heritage Centre on Friday 23rd March 2018 at 2pm on 'Humphry Repton in Redbridge'. Details are not yet finalised.

IHS PROGRAMME 2017-2018

Our regular monthly meetings are held at Ilford Hospital Chapel, The Broadway, Ilford Hill, Ilford, IG1 2AT from 7.30 – 9.30 pm.

Visitors welcome, £3 per meeting, with free refreshments

Limited parking is available at the rear of the chapel and many buses stop nearby at Ilford Station. (Wheelchair access via the rear entrance)

8 January 2018 *Geoffrey Chaucer's England. A Poet's Tale of Medieval 14th Century Life.* by Jef Page, IHS President.

12 February 2018 *The Pre-fab Museum – celebrating Britain's post-war homes.* by Jane Hearn, Co-Director of the Museum.

12 March 2018 International Women's Month *'My Hideous Progeny': Mary Shelley and Frankenstein 1818-2018* by Janet Seward, IHS Secretary.

9 April 2018 at 7pm AGM

followed by *Frank Tingey's Sketches of Barking, Essex and elsewhere. A prolific artist, he lived in Barking from 1930 till his death in 2012 aged 94. Barking & District HS published his drawings in 2014, part of their 80th celebrations.* by Bill George, author & President of Barking & District HS.

14 May 2018 Local History Month *On the Street Where You Live. Walking down Ilford's streets can tell us a lot about its development and houses.* by Colin Runeckles, IHS member.

Membership of the society costs £15 per year which includes 3 newsletters

The next newsletter will be available at our April meeting, or from the editor (details on page 1) after 11th April.